Retention and Attrition Among New Recruits

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Accessioning Process

Contact with Recruiter

Selection

Classification
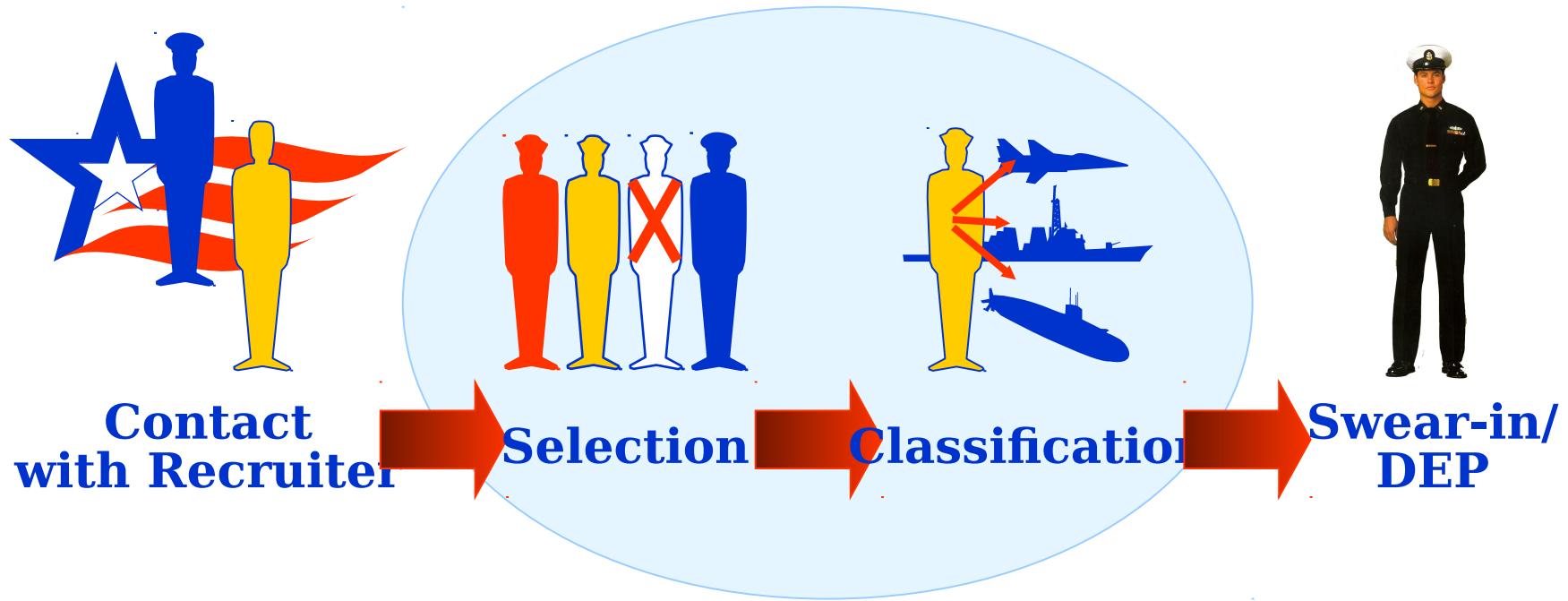
Swear-in/ DEP

- **Ability screens**

- **Moral, financial, and educational screens**

- **AFQT**

- **Background affidavits**

- **Medical exam**

- **Job & Career Info**

- **School guarantee**

- **Ship date**

- **ASVAB scores**

- **Swear-in**

- **Delayed Entry Program**

- **Ship to RTC**

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Training Pipeline

Reporting for In-processing

A School Training

9 weeks later-
Marching to RTC
Graduation
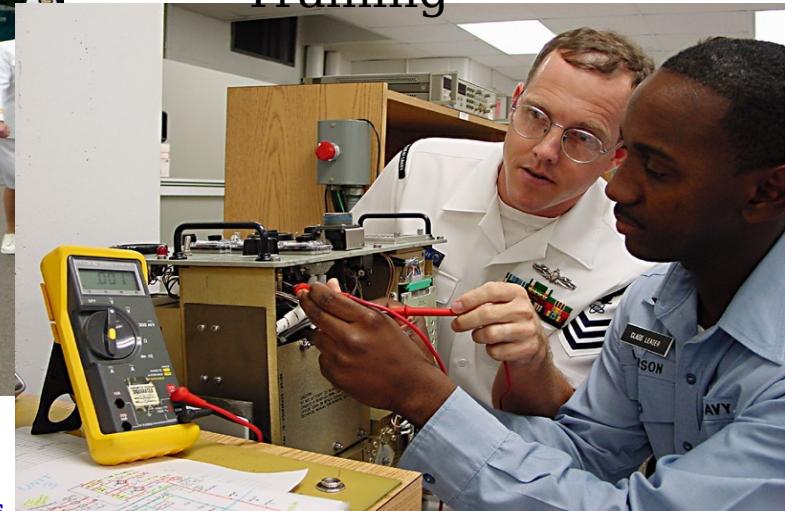
Attrition is a Longitudinal Problem

- **Lose 10,000+ in training**
- **Lose 8,000+ from Fleet**

52,000 Enter

-7,000
-3,100
-2,600
-2,500
-1,600
-800

Of remaining 34,000, 19,000 Re-enlist

| RTC | A/App | 12 mo | 24 mo | 36 mo | 48 mo |

Recruits **Training** **Fleet** **Reenlistments**
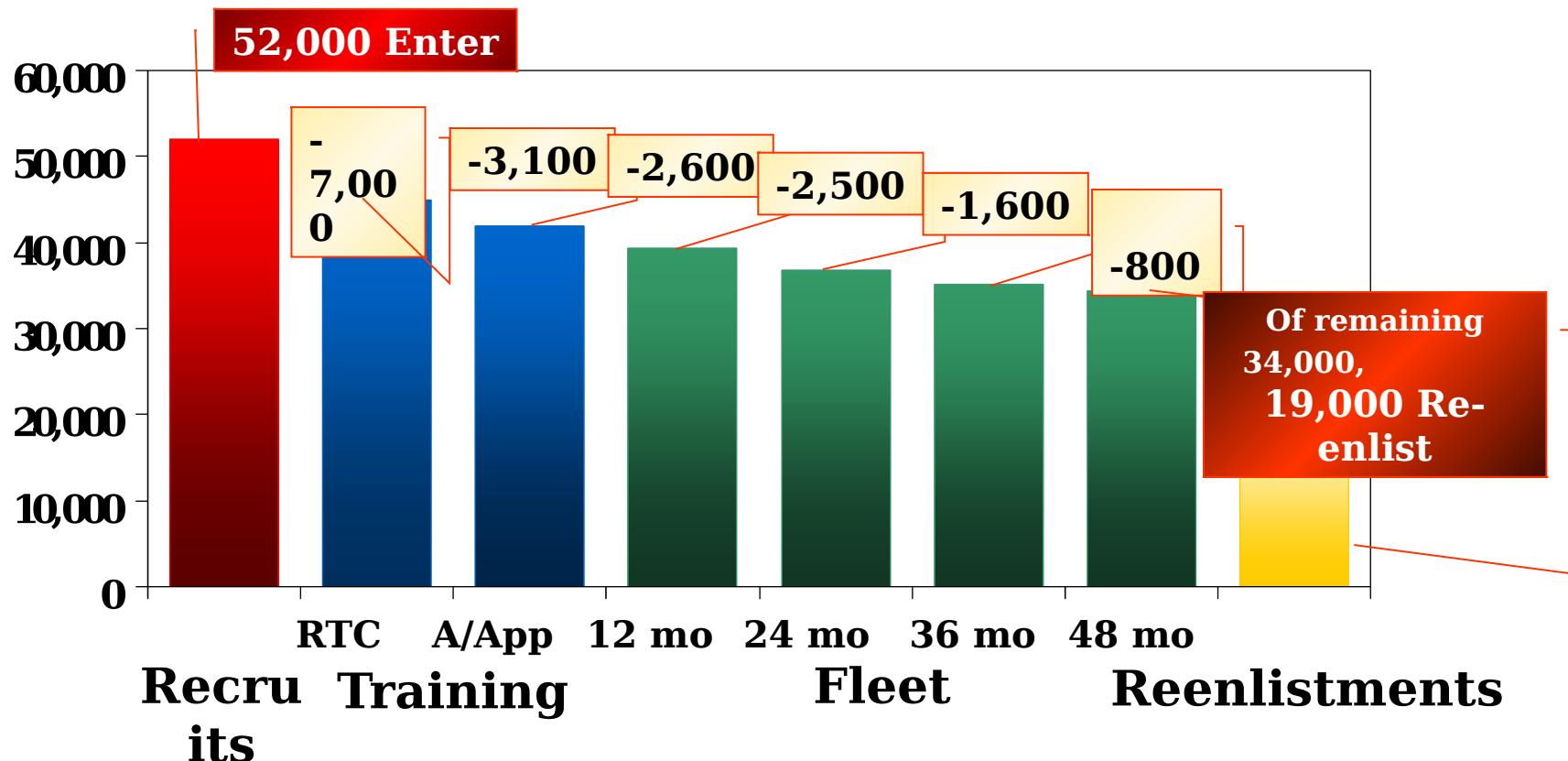
Composite estimates of cohort losses Projected Attrition and Reenlistment for First-Term Sailors: FY02 Q1 update (CNA 22Feb02)

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1ˢᵗ Watch Objective

Understand what affects career across first-term of enlistment

Comprehensive Questionnaire	**+**	**Unique Measures**	**+**	**Longitudinal Design**

- **Identify recruits/sailors at risk**
- **Identify intervention points**
- **Provide tools for**
- **Better quality sailors**
- **Better prepared sailors**
- **Reduce unwanted attrition**

Traditional Approach

- Limited focus on attrition

  - Concentrated on parts of the problem

  - Viewed attrition as a selection failure

- Used existing administrative data files to track and predict retention/attrition behavior

  - GAO identified problems

- Used "exit" survey to measure satisfaction

1st Watch Approach

- Broad, comprehensive view of retention and attrition

  - Follows a 1-year cohort of recruits (Apr 02 thru Mar 03)

  - Examines career decisions across entire first term

  - Looks at stayers and leavers

- NPRST teams with CNRC, NTC Great Lakes to produce unique personnel data

  - Recruiting

  - Training

  - Fleet

Questionnaires and their Common Components

New Sailor Survey	RTC Graduate Survey	A/Apprentice Graduate	Exit During Training Survey
Influence to Join Navy	RTC Command Climate	SSC Command Climate	RTC/SSC Command Climate
Recruiting and DEP	Recruiting and DEP	Training Evaluation	Recruiting and DEP
Classification	Classification & Re-class	Satisfaction with Rating	Classification
Navy Fit Scale	*Navy Fit Scale*	*Navy Fit Scale*	
Stress Coping Scale	Training Experiences	Training Experiences	*Navy Fit Scale*
	Problems During Training	Problems During Training	Training Experiences
	Navy Commitment Scale	*Navy Commitment Scale*	Problems During Training
			Reasons to Leave

Unique Measures

- ***Navy Commitment Scale* to predict attrition/affiliation**

  Emotional Commitment, Continuance Commitment, and Values Similarity

- ***Navy Recruit Stress Coping Scale* to identify recruits with poor coping skills for potential intervention**

  Usual coping approach, range of coping strategies, susceptibility to stress

- ***Navy Fit Scale* to identify recruits "at risk" and develop interventions to retain quality sailors**

  Based on Person-Organization Fit theory

Navy Commitment Scale

- **Based on Meyer & Allen ('87) Organizational Commitment Scale**

    Affective (ACS), Continuance (CCS) and Normative commitment(NCS)

    24 items pre-tested on 826 sailors

    › **NCS had low factor loading and dropped from Navy scale**

    › **ACS contributes 4 items to Emotional Commitment**

    › **CCS contributes 3 items to Continuation Commitment**

- **Created Values Similarity Subscale**

- **Tested in Argus and Reserve Career Decision Surveys**

Navy Stress Coping Skills Scale

- **"Stress and anxiety are likely to be high when newcomers find themselves in a new organization…"(Cable and Parsons, 2001)**

- **Ways of Coping Checklist (WCCL), Vitaliano, et al.**

  - **42-item scale pre-tested and yielded 5 coping strategies**

    - **Problem Focused, Blamed Self, Seeks Social Support, Wishful Thinking, and Avoidance**

- **Additional item on amount of stress currently experiencing**

- **Individuals with stronger stress coping skills will be more likely to complete training**

Navy Fit Scale

- **Civilians enter with needs and expectations**

- **Navy has needs, expectations, and resources**

- **Initially the person-organization "fit" is rough**

- **Through training and experience civilians are "Sailorized"**

- **The "fit" becomes better over time**

- **This "fit" can be facilitated**

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Use New Instruments and Existing Data with Longitudinal and Cross-Sectional Samples

Begin in RTC

End RTC

End School

Fleet Transition Points

End 1st Term

Database Links:
- **PRIDE**
- **NITRIS**
- **EMF**
- **NRAMS**

New Sailor Survey

RTC Graduate Survey

Exit Training Survey

"A"/Apprentice School Graduate Survey

Cohort Fleet Survey

Argus Career Milestone Decision System
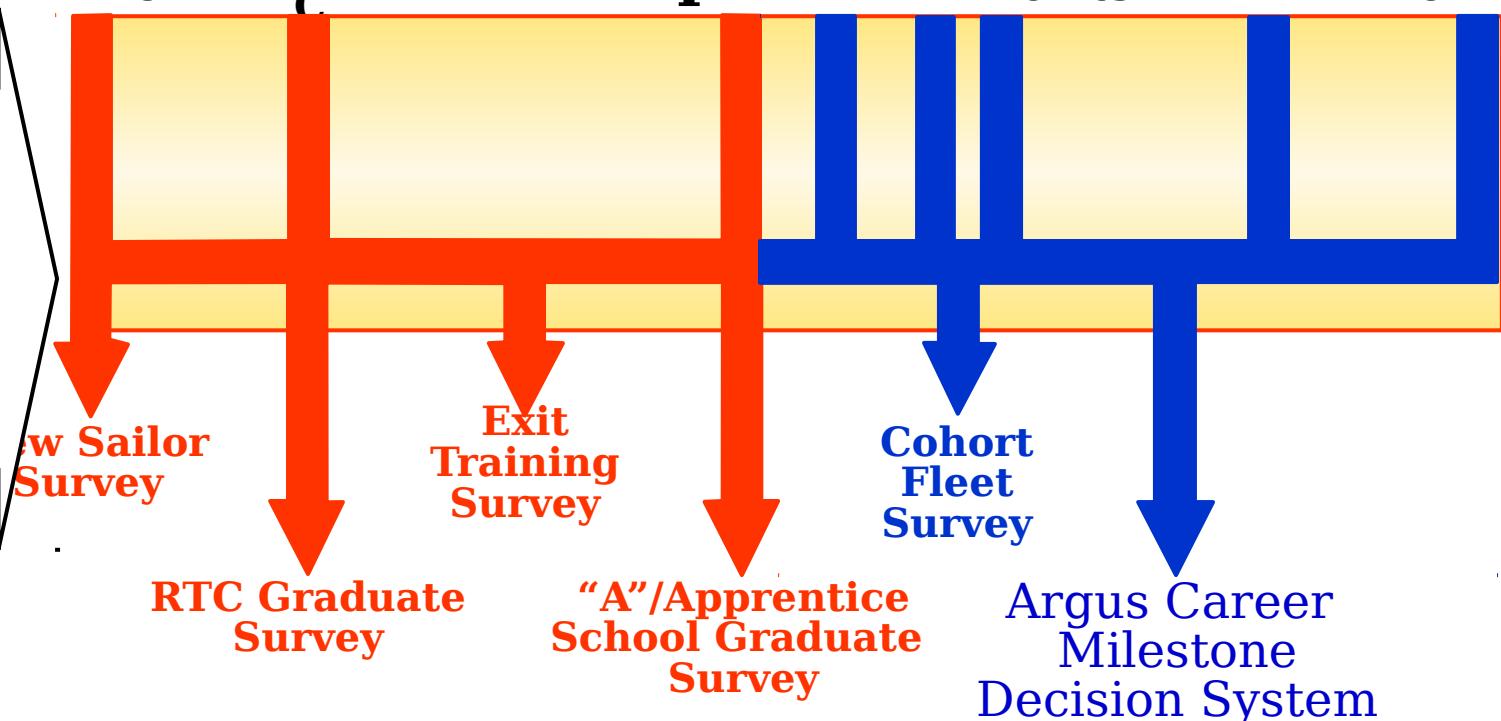
Future

- **Continue scale validation**

- **Design and test Cohort Fleet questionnaire**

- **Continue cohort tracking**

    Link all questionnaires and PRIDE, NITRAS II and EMF

- **Complete first technical report in FY03**

- **Continue data collection at Great Lakes through FY04**